



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The President of the Association, Professor E. S. Sheldon, appointed the following committees :

- (1) To audit the Treasurer's report: Professors E. S. Babbitt and W. Stuart Symington.
- (2) To recommend a place for the next annual meeting: Professors H. E. Greene, F. H. Stoddard, F. B. Gummere, G. E. Karsten, and A. Cohn.
- (3) To nominate officers: Professors Calvin Thomas, Albert S. Cook, O. F. Emerson, H. C. G. von Jagemann, and L. R. Gregor.

The reading of papers was then begun.

1. "Notes on the Ruthwell Cross." By Professor Albert S. Cook, of Yale University.

2. "Augier's *L'Aventurière* of 1848 and 1860." By Professor A. Rambeau, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

I. Bibliography:—

Augier's *avertissement* of May 2nd, 1860, in *Théâtre Complet*, edition Calmann Lévy, Paris, 1897, volume I, p. 163; Francisque Sarcey's *feuilleton* of April 16th, 1869, in his *Quarante Ans de Théâtre*, vol. v (1901), pp. 7-15; Mr. Doumic's essay upon *Émile Augier*, in his *Portraits d'écrivains* (1894?), pp. 66-67, and his article upon the comedy of manners in the nineteenth century, in *Petit de Julleville's Histoire de la Langue et de la Littérature française*, vol. VIII (1899), p. 117.

II. Mr. Doumic's opinion:—

1) *L'Aventurière* of 1848 is a pure *comédie picaresque*, based upon a single conception of dramatic art and free from discrepancies or disparities, all the characters of the play being consistent with themselves and in full concordance with the surroundings or *milieu* in which they are placed.

2) *L'Aventurière* of 1860, being founded upon two extremely different conceptions of dramatic art, a strange compound of *comédie picaresque* and *drame bourgeois* (or contemporary comedy of manners), lacking unity of tone, color, and conception, and containing most shocking discrepancies or disparities, is therefore inferior to the first version.

3) Augier was a slow worker, a slow, though very powerful thinker. He was liable to spoil a dramatic work by remodeling or recasting it after

a certain number of years (e. g., *L'Aventurière* of 1848 and 1860). On the other hand, he was able to improve a drama by taking up the same theme again after many years of thinking, giving it a new dramatic shape, and treating it in an entirely new comedy (cp. *Un Homme de bien*, 1845, and *Maître Guérin*, 1864).

The first of these statements, made by Mr. Doumic with all the resources of a brilliant rhetoric, is wrong: he gives no facts, and there are none, I think, that would prove or corroborate the truth of his assertions, and it appears to be a creation of his fertile imagination. Consequently, the conclusion which Mr. Doumic reaches in the second statement is unfounded and gratuitous. Moreover, the conclusion contained in the third statement is at least unwarrantable, so far as it refers to *L'Aventurière*.

III. Comparative study of the two versions of *L'Aventurière* (A and B):—

- 1) Place and local color;
- 2) The *dramatis personae*, and their names;
- 3) Plot, situation, dramatic action, and *dénouement*;
- 4) Characters and rôles.

IV. Résumé and Conclusion:—

1. The old version (*A*) of *L'Aventurière* is essentially the same play as the new one (*B*),—that is, a combination of two or even three different conceptions of dramatic art, a *comédie picaresque* and a modern *drame bourgeois*, with an idyllic love episode.

2. The changes introduced into the text by the revision of 1860 concern details, the language, and only one character.

1) The most important change of details is in the last part of the play, which is much longer in the old version (Act IV, with the last four scenes of Act III, and Act V having been replaced by one act in *B*). Here the dramatic action leading up to the *dénouement* advances, in the original drama, very slowly and, no doubt, according to the poet's opinion, too slowly.

2) A great many verses have been altered, or suppressed and replaced by another text, in the new version. As a rule, style and versification, where the two texts differ, are better and more careful in *B*.

3) Mucarade's character, in *A*, is inconsistent; that of Monte-Prade, in *B*, is consistent. This change has affected the general impression of the play in some measure,—by no means in the *dénouement* nor in regard to the general tendency of the drama,—but very obviously at the beginning, which is burlesque in *A*. This fact seems to have caused M. Doumic's error.

The combination of two or even three different conceptions of dramatic art in the same play may be objectionable from a critic's point of view. But his judgment is not confirmed by the opinion of the public and the decisive vote of posterity. *L'Aventurière* not only was a successful play during the poet's lifetime, but its success seems to be durable and rather to increase with the lapse of time; whereas Augier's purely realistic dramas,

including even *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*, *Maître Guérin* and *Les Effrontés*, which were most admired by his contemporaries, and which modern critics universally declare to be his masterpieces, have already lost part of their lustre and a great deal of their interest—at least, for a French public. In these dramas, the powerful realism and the extremely exact portraiture of living characters,—the delight of Augier's contemporaries and their principal title to fame,—already prevents them from being quickly understood at every point, and from being fully appreciated in every detail at the present day. They have begun to grow old and to appear somewhat faded, since the generation to which the poet himself belonged, and which he portrayed so faithfully, has passed away. Indeed the *bourgeois* society, in France, has changed considerably since Augier's time. Some of the social questions raised in his realistic plays have been settled, or have disappeared entirely. The public no longer recognizes as really existing all the characters painted by Augier, and no longer regards as actual and true a great deal of what was the exact picture of real life about the middle of the last century.

However, the peculiar mixture of fancy and realism, with a moral and social question rather generalized by the vague and foreign local color of the play, combined with a good versification, half Classical, half Romantic, which is not the least of its charms, and with a poetical language (which, in a literary work, is likely to resist time longer than prose), seems to insure the success of *L'Aventurière* far into the future.

As to the relative value of the two texts of *L'Aventurière*, I think that Augier himself (see his *avertissement*) and the administration of the Théâtre-Français were right in giving the preference to the new version, and that it is on the whole superior to the original drama. But I am well aware that Sarcey's criticism has some strong points, which I have stated and frankly admitted. In purely aesthetic matters, there is, it would seem, no absolute standard; and in settling such questions, a great deal (sometimes, perhaps, all) depends on the critic's personal taste and his individual standpoint.

In reality, my first and foremost aim was to correct, in this paper, a serious error regarding a fact, an error which was started by Mr. Doumic in an essay several years ago, and repeated by him, only two years ago, in an important book of reference. I am afraid this error may become eventually one of those common "literature legends," which, unless destroyed in time, spread and creep into class-books, manuals, and encyclopaedias, and are thus handed down from generation to generation as historical facts.

[This paper is to appear in full in the English *Modern Language Quarterly*.]

3. "Three Swabian Journalists of the American Revolution." By Dr. John A. Walz, of Harvard University.

4. "A Discrepancy in several of Schiller's Letters." By Professor J. B. E. Jonas, of Brown University.

5. "Report of the Pedagogical Section." By Professor W. E. Mead, of Wesleyan University, Secretary of the Pedagogical Section.

THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDY OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

A year ago the Pedagogical Section of the Modern Language Association investigated the question as to the feasibility of making advanced work in rhetoric (using that term in the broadest sense) a part of graduate university work counting toward a degree. The report read at the December meeting of last year was printed in the *Proceedings*. This year the investigation has been carried a step lower down, and has endeavored to test the opinions of competent judges on the question whether the methods of teaching composition now so widely followed are beyond the reach of criticism.

With this in view the committee selected, from a brief article in the *Century Magazine*, a passage representing an attitude of extreme hostility to the plan of compelling students to write frequent themes which should be corrected and returned to the writers.

The passage runs as follows :

A wide reader is usually a correct writer; and he has reached the goal in the most delightful manner, without feeling the penalty of Adam. . . . We would not take the extreme position taken by some, that all practice in theme-writing is time thrown away; but after a costly experience of the drudgery that composition work forces on teacher and pupil, we would say emphatically that there is no educational method at present that involves so enormous an outlay of time, energy, and money, with so correspondingly small a result. . . . In order to support this with evidence, let us take the experience of a specialist who investigated the question by reading many hundred sophomore compositions in two of our leading colleges, where the natural capacity and previous training of the students were fairly equal. In one college every freshman wrote themes steadily through the year, with an accompaniment of sound instruction in rhetorical principles; in the other college every freshman studied *Shakspeare*, with absolutely no training in rhetoric and with no practice in composition. A comparison of the themes written